

Good evening,

My name is Kadisha Coates

I am here to request for charter schools to be included in the Education Cost Sharing formula and propose changes to the ECS aimed at benefiting **all** forms of public school **students**.

Charter schools were put in place initially to provide meaningful improvements to **the public education system**. Many charter schools such as the one my children attend **Achievement First Bridgeport Academy** are providing their intended services, **such as college readiness tools** and invaluable worth to the communities they serve. Schools such as these deserve inclusion to the ECS Formula. They achieve high student proficiency rates, graduation rates, and have thousands on waiting lists. Lets also dispel rumors and innuendo about the student population in Bridgeport charter schools. The truth is that the mean income of the families attending charters is the same as other schools in Bridgeport. An innuendo like this one is extremely offensive to parents and students and takes the focus off of important issues. A child's ability to achieve is not determined by, his, or, her demographics. Yes, demographics do play a great role in the obstacles, and resources a child will **receive**. However, demographics do not determine intellectual capabilities.

Also, It is critical that the ECS formula is amended to encompass mandates enforced by multilateral checks and balances based on modern needs in conjunction with proven methods currently working within schools in the same municipalities. No school in the state of Connecticut should be forced to function without the necessities **required** to instruct students

adequately, and that includes teachers.

I am here this afternoon to speak on behalf of, not only my children, but all children attending public schools here in Connecticut. I am urging you to please add charter schools and a system of multitiered checks and balances to an ECS formula. All public school children, despite their demographics, deserve an excellent education. In order for this to happen, ALL students in our public education system must be funded fairly to account for students' needs. Thank you.